


RARE MALAYAN RHINOCEROS.

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RARE MALAYAN
RHINOCEROS.

British Museum's Search For Specimen.

NEARLY EXTINCT.

Hunt In Selangor And Perak Swamps.

(From Our Own Correspondent.)

Kuala Lumpur, Saturday.

An expedition is being organised in Malaya, on behalf of the British Museum, to search for a one-horned **rhinoceros**—an animal extremely rare in this country. The expedition, which will comprise Major A. S. Vernay, Major G. S. Rowley and Captain Holloway, will not be without danger, for the one-horned **rhinoceros** has a bad reputation.

One of the rarest animals in the world is to be sought on behalf of the British Museum by an expedition which is now assembling in Malaya.

This animal is the one-horned rhinoceros, *rhinoceros sondaicus*, of which only two or three specimens are known in this country. There are no records of its having been found on the eastern side of the Malay Peninsula, although this region has not been explored thoroughly enough to say positively that it does not exist here.

It is almost, if not quite, extinct in southern Burma: it is unknown in the

Siamese part of the Malay Peninsula; it is represented by a few dozen individuals in Java, all strictly protected; and there are believed to be a small number in Sumatra.

The one-horned **rhinoceros** lives in swampy jungle, unlike its cousin, the two-horned **rhinoceros**, which prefers mountainous country. The latter is a much smaller animal and is still fairly common in the wilder parts of the Malay Peninsula. The one-horned species was common in years gone by, but the advance of civilization into its haunts, and the persistent hunting of it which has resulted from the high prices paid for its blood and horns by Chinese medicine men, have almost extinguished it in Malaya.

In the Interests of Science.

Indeed, it is only after very careful inquiry has shown that the two, or perhaps, three specimens of the one-horned **rhinoceros** which are believed to exist in the Kuala Selangor and Lower Perak jungles are old and completely isolated males, and therefore unable to propagate their kind, that the Malayan authorities have sanctioned this expedition.

These survivors, if not killed for museum purposes, will be either poached by native hunters or will die a natural death, whereas the British Museum expedition, if successful, will benefit posterity by obtaining in the interests of science specimens of a species which may soon have vanished from Malaya.

expressed last night by the ex-Dominions Secretary, Mr. A. L. Amery, that the plan will prove unworkable.

Although the originator of this striking departure from the constitutional theory of Cabinet government has not been revealed, the name of Sir John Simon has been suggested as the author.

It is thought unlikely that Viscount Snowden and his co-dissentients, Sir Herbert Samuel, Sir Donald Maclean and Sir Archibald Sinclair, will carry their opposition outside the House by speeches in the country.

The Tariff Bill.

It is understood that the Tariff Bill, which will be introduced as soon as possible after the reassembly of Parliament, will include iron and steel; while there will be preference for Empire goods, the taxes are expected to be permanent and not merely of an emergency nature.

The solution has met with a varied reception at the hands of the Press. The Morning Post is of the opinion that the expedient is unsound and cannot succeed.

The Daily Telegraph feels that a breach of the whole modern theory of Cabinet government is only justified by the emergency.

The Daily Express finds in it the "grand old game of formula hunting to save Ministerial faces." The Daily Mail says the solution will be wholly approved by practical men.

While the Daily Herald says it is a "contemptible business," the News Chronicle says the proposals are bad in theory and will be found impossible in practice.

The Times says the real justification of the Cabinet's action is that it faces the facts—political and economic—at home and, above all, abroad.—Reuter.

There is believed to be no representative specimen of the one-horned rhinoceros in any museum at the present time. The British Museum has a small immature specimen, and so has the Museum of Comparative Zoology in Cambridge, U.S. A., while there is said to be another specimen in a Stockholm museum.

There are two fine heads in the Kuala Lumpur museum, one being that of the famous old beast which terrorised the Pinji Valley, near Ipoh, for many years before the British regime in Perak. The history of this rhinoceros is told by Sir George Maxwell in his book, "In Malay Forests."

Four Malayan Specimens.

The available information relating to the incidence of this species in Malaya has

recently been set out by Mr. Boden Kloss in the Journal of the F.M.S. Museums and the Bulletin of Raffles Museum.

Four of these animals are known to have been shot in this country. One was the Pinji rhino, which fell a victim to the rifle of Sir (then Mr.) George Maxwell in 1899. Another was shot by the late Mr. H. C. Barnard near Chikus, in Perak, in 1898. In 1924 a cow of this species, which had charged a Chinese jelutong tapper in the jungle near Telok Anson, was shot by an unlicensed hunter, and as recently as 1927 a fourth specimen was shot at Ujong Permatang, Selangor, and its head is now in the F.M.S. Police Mess at Kuala Lumpur.

The expedition which will shortly set out in search of a specimen will comprise

Major A. S. Vernay, Major G. S. Rowley and Captain Holloway. In 1928 Major Vernay, with the co-operation of the Government of Burma, made an expedition into southern Burma in search of the one-horned rhinoceros but failed to get a specimen. The species is now thought to be practically extinct in that region. Major Vernay also led a scientific expedition across the Kalahari desert some time ago.

Major Rowley is an experienced big-game hunter and Captain Holloway is a collector employed by the British Museum. Captain Holloway will take back with him a considerable amount of Malayan material for the British Museum.

Not Without Danger.

The expedition will not be without danger, for the one-horned rhinoceros has a bad reputation. The Pinji veteran was known to have killed three men and to have chased many more. Indeed Sir George Maxwell says that only large and well-armed parties would venture into its neighbourhood. The Telok Anson animal is also believed to have killed a man before she attacked a tapper, as mentioned above.

The killing of a rhinoceros, whether of the swamp or hill species, is a very profitable business for native poachers, the blood and horns being sold to Chinese medicine men at a high price. The blood is coagulated and sold in tablets, while the horns, either ground up or hollowed out, are believed to confer protection against poisoning.



This head of a one-horned rhinoceros is in the possession of Mrs. Barnard. The animal was shot by the late Mr. H. C. Barnard in April, 1838, at Sungei Pelawan, near Chikus, Perak.